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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a case study which sought to determine the motivational factors that prompted a set of triplets to excel in school. The working research questions dealt with different facets of school and home, and explored whether motivation was linked to certain subjects or certain topics within various subjects or was a function of the demands of their parents. Questions were refined as participant observation revealed subtle differences in motivation in the three children. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with the triplets and other key informants; solicited documents; and samples of work done by the triplets. The results showed that within a shared basic framework of self-motivation, each of the three children developed separate, distinct motivational personalities. Positive self-concept and intrinsic motivation were evident in all three children. Each child had varying reasons for motivation including wanting perfection, interest, and wanting to please others. A collective case study is recommended of children of multiple births to inquire further into the phenomenon of motivation. (Contains an appendix with examples of early writings of the triplets.) (Author/JDM)

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Samantha, Matthew, and Shane: A Case Study of the Motivational Factors That Drive These Triplets to Learn

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine the motivational factors that prompted this set of triplets to excel in school. These three children were observed to be outstanding students as compared to the other students in terms of their participation in school, the quality of their work, and their continual enthusiasm to learn. The working research questions dealt with different facets of school and home, whether motivation was linked to a certain subject, certain topics within various subjects, or high demands from their parents. These questions were refined as participant observation revealed subtle differences in motivation in the three children, which became the focus of the study.

A review of literature showed major themes of motivation appeared to be related strongly to intrinsic goals. Being intrinsically motivated was shown to improve self-concept and academic achievement. Various people in the child's life and the viewpoint of achievement by the child are other contributing factors in motivation.

Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with the triplets and other key informants, solicited documents and samples of work done by the triplets. Data were coded and sorted into eight categories.

The results showed that within a shared basic framework of self-motivation, each of the three children developed separate, distinct "motivational personalities". The parents had provided a wide variety of activities early in life that were perceived to be enjoyable. Positive self-concept and intrinsic motivation were evident in all three children. Each child had varying reasons for motivation: wanting perfection motivated one, interest motivated another, and one was motivated by wanting to please others and be noticed. A collective case study is recommended of children of multiple births to inquire further into the phenomenon of motivation.

INTRODUCTION

Samantha, Matthew and Shane are a set of triplets at a north central Louisiana school. During the previous school year, the researcher had the opportunity to teach all three of them in her science and social studies classes. Since the beginning of that school year, it was noticed that these three children really excelled in school. They simply stood out among the other students in terms of their participation in school, the quality of their work, and their continual enthusiasm to learn. These three students became a topic of interest to the researcher. She wanted to observe them to discover what it was about them that gave them this endless drive to learn more.

The topic of motivation became of interest to the researcher recently. In the past four years, she had taught low ability groups of students and had basically adopted the opinion that students were just not motivated to do any more than what was required of them in school. Having the opportunity to teach all of the third graders that year opened the researcher's eyes to the various things that drive some students to learn, while others were passive and could care less. The researcher became interested in the factors that could contribute to motivation building or "tearing-down" process. She became interested to find whether such things as tangible rewards, teacher praise, or other factors contribute to the building of self-motivation. Research in this area could help to define processes and strategies that could better equip teachers to reach more students. In light of high stakes testing and accountability standards, teachers are in need of every possible tool in order to help students succeed. Motivation is the force that compels students to participate in class and to produce the types of work they do in school. What a child does in the classroom was found by Lange and Adler (1997) to be the most important indicator of achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to find the factors that motivate Samantha, Matthew, and Shane to excel in school. The dynamic of three siblings that had such high motivational levels intrigued the researcher. At the onset of the study the working research questions dealt with such issues as the

different facets of school: was it a certain subject area that motivated the three children? Was their motivation due to certain topics of study within the various subjects at school? Did their parents put high demands on them to make good grades?

As the study progressed, the researcher refined the questions somewhat. The researcher started to see subtle differences in the three children, differences that made her believe that each one of them had different reasons for being motivated. Finding these different reasons became of interest. How three children who were exposed to the same experiences throughout their lives and yet have three different viewpoints of motivation became fascinating to the researcher. She began to focus on each child's differences to gain a better understanding of the motivational factors that inspire each of them to learn.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature shows that there are many factors that can promote student motivation. Busch-Rossnagel and Morgan (1998) state that it is important for children to develop mastery motivation. Mastery motivation is the drive that incites the want to explore the environment and the attempt to become expert in tasks that are perceived to be somewhat challenging. This concept is important to develop within children because of the evidence that task orientation can foretell the later school success of children. Development of mastery motivation is needed in the very early years of a child's life. This study states that the development of "mastery motivation in infancy has been found to be more of a predictor of later competence than developmental tests" (p. 2). Another factor noted in this same study was mastery pleasure, which is the assertion of positive influence during or immediately after being engaged in task-oriented behavior. Persistence on tasks and the positive outcome of the task were seen to be intertwined as motivational factors necessary for future school success.

In another study, four motivational dimensions were tested in order to determine achievement in upper elementary students (Lange & Adler, 1997). These dimensions dealt with motivation. First the child's motivational attributions were assessed. This meant identifying the factor to which the child attributes his/her success or failure, whether it was effort, ability or luck. Motivational goal orientation, the second dimension, was associated with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Those children who were intrinsically motivated were involved in a task just for the pleasure derived from it. Extrinsically motivated students sought outside sources, such as pleasing a teacher or parent, as their source of motivation. A third dimension addressed in the study was the child's self-perception. This dimension measured whether the student felt that they were competent enough to achieve. These three motivational concepts were believed to contribute to learning and achievement through mastery oriented behaviors, which is the final dimension of the study. This dimension encompassed being goal oriented, looking for challenging work, participating, and working independently as the catalyst in the learning process.

There were several outcomes to the Lange and Adler study that contribute to this literature review. First is the finding that the intrinsically motivated students had higher self-concepts and showed mastery behaviors at higher levels in school. Also, the researchers found that the children's achievement levels were the result of both ability and motivation. Another interesting finding was that mastery behaviors exhibited in school were a connecting factor, linking intrinsic goal orientation and success in the classroom with self-concept and success. The three most important dimensions found by the researchers in the development of motivation were intrinsic goal orientation, self-perception of academic ability, and mastery oriented behaviors. Overall, as stated earlier in this paper, what a child does in the classroom is the most important factor that specifies achievement.

In a study by Wentzel (1998), the purpose was to examine the supportive relationships between sixth grade students and their parents, teachers, and peers and the association of these people with the students' motivation in school. The study looked at both social and academic goals that students attempt to achieve in school and the interest associated with those academic activities. For the purpose of this paper, only the academic results will be reported. Academic goals were subdivided into mastery and performance goal orientations. Mastery goal orientations dealt with the desire to achieve gained from the learning process because it is satisfying or because of feelings of competence or intellectual development. Performance goal orientation dealt with the desire to achieve drawn from personal values or expectations related to the involvement in a task. The findings showed that all three groups of people (peers, teachers, and parents) contributed in some fashion to the motivation in students. In terms of academic goals, parents and teachers were seen as contributing factors. The researcher also noted that children tend to value the parental support more highly in the elementary years, and that peer support is more pertinent in the adolescent school years.

Another study attempted to see whether learning goals or performance goals made a difference in the motivation and achievement of fourth grade students in a mathematics unit (Schunk, 1996). The learning goals were defined as the knowledge and skills that students were to acquire. Performance goals were defined as tasks that students are to complete. The researcher hypothesized that those students

who undertake learning goals will gain a sense of self-efficacy, a personal belief of their own capability to learn, and thus be motivated to attempt activities that are appropriate for learning. Self-evaluation was also looked at to see if it influenced the motivation and achievement of the participants in the study. The study showed that learning goals enhanced self-efficacy and motivation, as well as skill and task goal orientation through self-evaluation during the acquisition of skills.

Summary

In this brief literature review, major themes of motivation appeared to be related strongly to intrinsic goals; the pleasure derived from being involved in a learning task. This intrinsic desire to learn should be established in the early years of a child's life. Being intrinsically motivated was shown to improve self-concept and academic achievement. Various people in the child's life can contribute to motivation at various stages in life. The viewpoint of achievement, whether the student believes he/she is to "learn" a concept rather than just to "perform" the task can also be a factor in motivation.

METHODOLOGY

Setting

This intrinsic case study was done in order to determine the motivational factors that prompted a set of triplets to excel in school. The site was an elementary school in a north central Louisiana town. This school has a student body consisting of 85% Black students and 15% Caucasian, Hispanic, and Asian students. The setting revolves around the third grade classes at this school. The school had departmentalized the third, fourth, and fifth grades this school year. This is the process of having the students enrolled in a homeroom class. In the third grade the homeroom teacher instructed the group in her assigned subject, spelling, and handwriting. The third grade classes then rotated, going to each of the four teachers throughout the day for one hour for each class. The children got instruction in math, science/social studies, reading, and language. Each teacher then taught all the third grade students in her particular area of instruction.

Participants

The participants in the study were a set of triplets who were seen as "over-achievers". Their work and behavior in school were exemplary and they stood out as most likely the top three students in the third grade at this school. The children were nine years old and were born in November of 1990. Samantha is the eldest of the three children. She is a thin, rather tall White girl, with long, wavy blond hair that is often pulled back in a ponytail. She wears nice looking clothing to school, often skirts and tops that are coordinated with tights and nice shoes. It is not impossible for her to "dress down", though! There are times when Samantha wears blue jeans and T-shirts. She appears to be a happy, well-adjusted child who enjoys many things. Her mother, in a personal interview, stated that Samantha participated in Girl Scouts, and that she is on a boy/girl baseball team with her brothers.

Matthew is the middle child of the three children. Matthew is a medium sized White boy with very short blonde hair. Matthew usually wears blue jeans and polo-type shirts to school, and almost always a pair of boots. Matthew gives the air of being "intellectual". His speech still retains much of a British accent (the family lived in England for a year and a half when the children were two). He almost always is found reading a book, except at recess, where he can be found playing basketball or football with the other third grade boys.

Shane is the youngest of the three. Shane is slightly taller than Matthew is, and lanky, with the same short blonde hair as his brother. The two boys look very much alike in their facial features. He is the blue jeans and T-shirt type, and usually wears boots. His mother describes him as "gregarious, goal-oriented, and enterprising". The teachers at this school see Shane as the more personable and out-going of the three children. He was also described as "talkative" by some of the teachers.

Data Sources

Several data sources were used in this qualitative study. Participant observations were conducted by the researcher in several settings within the school and at various times throughout the school day. The children were observed in her classes, in their homeroom classes, in the school computer lab, and on the playground. Personal, semi- structured interviews were conducted with each of the children, as well as their mother, who works as an aide at the school in the computer lab. Solicited documents were obtained from the other three third grade teachers. They were asked to write their impressions of these three students and their work habits, the quality of their work, and whether they felt they were self-motivated and why. Pictures were taken of the students in regards to several events that they were involved in within the researcher's classes and during observations for this study. Copies of the students' work were obtained (see Appendix A) to show the exemplary quality of their work and the interests of these students.

Data Analysis/Coding

The data were analyzed using the coding system listed in a text by Bogdan & Bikden (1998). Highlighters were used to sort the data into eight categories: activity, relationship/ social structure, setting/context, definition of situation (subcategories-teacher perception, parent perception, participant perspective), process, and methods.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The purpose of this study was to focus on Samantha, Matthew, and Shane's motivational differences to gain a better understanding of the factors that inspire each of them to learn. The researcher looked at various subject areas, certain topics, and different types of work done at school as possible motivational factors of these children. The parents were considered as well, whether they placed high demands on the children or if there were other factors that may be involved in the motivation of the children.

Samantha

As the study progressed, it became apparent that each of the three children had different motivational factors that spurred them on to learn more. Samantha was described by her mother as " a leader; very much the perfectionist". Various factors in the observation meshed with this comment. It was observed that when she was working on a science project with two other girls, she acted as a leader in the group. She was taking notes, gave directions to the group, and assigned each girl a job. She was continually giving directions to the group as the project progressed and attempted to balance the work between the three girls. She exhibited perfectionism in several ways, too. She asked several times for confirmation that the group was doing the work correctly. The rsearcher observed her looking at a poster of the human body on the wall and then checking the drawing on her paper, as if she was checking for accuracy. She was on-task the entire time. She was very meticulous in her work by constantly comparing and checking colors and the correctness of her drawing. She exhibited perfectionist type actions in her homeroom classroom as well. On the day the researcher came to observe, the class was working on a spelling lesson. Samantha was always ready ahead of time. She always had her paper and materials ready to start before all the others in the class. During the spelling test, she was checking her work and used strategies such as using her jaw to count the number of syllables in a word and corrected her paper.

Samantha's mother gave other insights to this area of perfectionism. She told the researcher that Samantha "can get stressed at times. She has actually cried herself to sleep if things aren't exactly perfect". She also stated that this perfectionism motivates her, but that "being a girl is also a factor. She just feels that she must work harder at it. She feels that she must live up to a certain standard and must accomplish everything."

The teachers collaborated with the fact that Samantha appears to be a perfectionist. Her homeroom teacher described her as "highly motivated", that her writing and drawings were "exceptional", and that "she uses elaboration and many details" (see Appendix A). One of the other teachers replied in her notes that Samantha was "serious minded and very conscious about her work".

Samantha has exhibited through her own words and work at school that she considers herself to be smart. In Appendix A, in the assignment "All About", Samantha wrote that the two words that describe me best are "smart" and "happy". In the "How About a Little Help?" assignment she shows the stress about being perfect. The worksheet asks the student to give three reasons why the student would not like to lose his/her big toe. One of her responses was "I would look funny in front of everybody, and they would laugh, which would make me feel sad".

Samantha's interview and her work also reflect other factors that may contribute to her motivation in school. When she was asked to tell what the word 'motivated' means, she said, "It's having more knowledge than others. That you do better and are smarter." The researcher told her that was part of it, but that it meant that you wanted to know more things just because you wanted to. She then replied that she felt as though she was motivated because "I get help from my mom... And I enjoy reading, and I enjoy things that my friends might not what to do. My parents pay attention to me..." In her work samples, she wrote that she was "thankful that she was talented" and that she was "thankful that I have a good school...and a good teacher. If I didn't go to school I would not be very smart". During one observation, Samantha was in the hallway after recess and her group had been working on the science project mentioned earlier. The researcher asked if she enjoyed the project and she said, "Yes,

I like doing things like this for school". When asked about her social studies fair topic of ballet, she said, "We're just interested in it".

From these data, it appears that Samantha's motivation lies within several factors. First, she must be a perfectionist. She must be first and is stressed if she has not done the best job possible. She also exhibits leadership characteristics, such as assigning jobs. She also has a self-concept that she is "smart". She also conveyed that her mother's help plays a part in her motivation.

Matthew

Matthew's motivation, according to his mother, is his "interest". She explained that if he wasn't interested then he would not care, but if he "gets his mind on something, he can get absorbed into it and neglect other things". Different observations confirm this statement. Matthew appeared to be very interested in the science project at the end of the drug unit. He was continually on-task and collaborating with his partner on the project. He was observed sharing ideas and asked for his partner's opinion of how their work should appear on their poster. Matthew's group did more than was required of the assignment as well, which leads the researcher to believe that he was interested in the topic. Their work exhibited extra effort, such as fancy borders and extra added details to different aspects of the poster. For the social studies fair at the school, Matthew became interested in the topic of the Egyptian pharaohs. He talked with the researcher about this topic at recess one day. That afternoon during the regular class period, he showed the researcher books that he had just gotten from the library on the subject. That day he finished his assignment early and asked permission to look at the books.

His mother confirmed his absorbed interest in this topic. In her interview, she told about Matthew discussing the social studies fair and how interested he was in the Egyptian pharaohs. "He took his own money and bought a software program called Pharaoh. He is constantly using it."

The reverse situation was observed as well; when he is not interested in something. During his regular class time, the class was reading a lesson about Amish communities. Matthew was definitely not with the class that day. He had his book open to the correct page, but he showed that he was not

interested in the topic by spinning a pencil topper on the top of his pencil while the class was reading aloud. He was not absorbed, as he had been on other occasions, such as the drug unit project.

One of Matthew's main interests is reading. In Matthew's work sample entitled "All About", he states that he thinks he is good at reading (see Appendix A). In his interview, he stated several times that "my favorite of all is reading" and that "I like to read a lot ...I definitely like to read." He attributes his motivation in school to the fact that he likes to read just to learn. The other third grade teachers mentioned his love of reading. His homeroom teacher commented that he had "a strong love of reading..." and that he was reading at the seventh grade level and had over 100 points in the Accelerated Reader program at our school. Another teacher wrote "every spare minute he has I see him reading."

Matthew's work and his interview with the researcher give some other clues about things that motivate him. Matthew described himself as being "talented" in the "All About" assignment (see Appendix A). He also wrote in this assignment that he is happiest when he "goes to a museum." In his interview, he also mentioned that he "really likes to write stories" as exhibited by his writing sample entitled "A Great Trip". He also stated that he likes "having lots of things to do." He also said that he gets "unhappy over long weekends...Because I'd much rather be in school."

Matthew's motivation seems to be fixed upon his interests, especially his interest in reading. He seems to need to feel a deep interest in something to be motivated to pursue it. He prefers to be in school and likes to be busy. He sees himself as "talented" and believes that he is a motivated person because he "likes to read to learn."

Shane

"Achievement is what motivates Shane, but he wants results quickly," according to his mother. The reason for this drive to achieve is not directly apparent. The data seem to reflect that there may be one or more reasons that motivate Shane to achieve. His mother explained in her interview that Shane saw that Matthew had gotten a T-shirt for the points he earned in the Accelerated Reader program and "that got him determined to get one, too." In his homeroom class on the day the researcher observed,

Shane tried to get noticed by the teacher, who was praising students that she saw that were ready for the spelling activity. Shane got ready quickly and sat up straight with his eyes straight ahead. His mother also mentioned that "Shane likes to please people." In the researcher's classroom, it was noticed that Shane will literally jump out of his chair at times, wanting to give the answer to the question. He thinks things through and takes his time, but when he has it figured out, he will wave his hand frantically in the air to get noticed. These data lead the researcher to think that Shane may be motivated by any of three things: determination to keep up with the other two children, the need to be noticed, and that he wants to please others.

The teachers reported some similar perceptions about Shane's motivation in school. He was described by one teacher as not "liking to make mistakes." Another teacher said that Shane was "an extremely hard worker... He has a very competitive drive to be the best." His homeroom teacher wrote that she felt he "put a lot of thought into his work, (he) wants to give inputs often in discussions, (and is) very attentive to everything." Again, some of these data seem to point to Shane being determined to keep up with his brother and sister, that he may feel the need to be noticed, and to make others happy.

Shane mentioned twice in the "All About" assignment that he is smart. One of the two words that he felt described himself the best was "smart" and he wrote that the thing he likes best about himself was that "I'm smart." This assignment also reflects that Shane likes to please people when he wrote that he feels best about himself when "I'm helping somebody." In his interview, Shane said that he "likes to learn new things, you know...Knowing things that I didn't know before" as one of the best things about school. He believes that he is motivated because "I'm curious and want to know more about things (and) because my parents help me."

Shane's motivational factors are not as easy to pinpoint as it was for his siblings. The data for the various sources bring about inconsistent findings. His mother feels achievement or the desire to please others may motivate him. The data from the teachers and from participant observations seem to show that Shane may feel the drive to excel because of wanting to please people, but it may be from wanting to be noticed, or wanting to keep up with his brother and sister. Shane seems to think that his

parents play a role in his motivation because they help him. He also identified the fact that he is a curious person and wants to know new things all the time. He also has a positive self-concept and describes himself as being smart.

Other Findings

The interview with the children's mother led the researcher to believe that there were some factors that contributed to motivation in all three children. In a brochure written by Delcourt (1998), she states that it is important to remember that the focus of developing motivational interests should be enjoyment. She also suggests providing a variety of experiences and the chance to try many activities. The parents of these children have done this. The children lived in England for a year and a half when they were very young and they have had many experiences. The mother mentioned that the children have been snorkeling, have been to museums, English castles, and have had various experiences by living in the country, such as owning an ostrich for a time and having a beaver living in the pond on their property. The mother stated that she "thinks they do well because they enjoy it and have always seen that their parents enjoy learning as well." As a final statement, she said, "I guess the children are motivated because life is seen by them to be an enjoyable learning experience."

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study point to factors that are shared by the three children that have contributed to their development of their self-motivation. Within this basic framework, each child has developed separate, distinct "motivational personalities". The basic framework that emerged was that the parents have provided from an early age a variety of activities for the children and that the children perceived these experiences as enjoyable. This is consistent with the recommendations of Delcourt (1998). The development of mastery motivation, as described by Busch-Rossnagel and Morgan (1998), was determined to be necessary early in life and was a strong predictor of later competence in school. Supportive relationships with parents were seen as an important factor in student's school motivation in the Wentzel (1998) study, especially in the elementary school years.

Intrinsic motivation and a positive self-concept were evident in all three children. As the Lange and Adler (1997) study concluded, these two factors contributed to the mastery orientation behaviors in the participants of their study. This dimension encompassed being goal oriented, looking for challenging work, participating, and working independently as the catalyst in the learning process. The children all identified themselves as "smart" or "talented", contributing to their positive self-concept. Comments made by the children and participant observations reflected the children's engagement in learning activities for the sheer pleasure of it. For example, Samantha said that she chose her topic for the social studies fair just because she was interested in it. Matthew said he liked reading and felt motivated because he liked "to read to learn." Shane mentioned that he "liked to learn new things...Knowing something that he didn't know before." In one observation, the children were in the computer lab before school, doing math speed games on the computer, and were laughing and appeared to have a good time. Mastery oriented behaviors were identified in the data as well. The mother said the children welcomed challenges and that they had set goals for themselves. The teachers commented that these children participate well in their classes.

During data collection, the emergence of subtle differences in the motivation of each child became apparent. Samantha was discovered to be a perfectionist and leader. Her mother stated these facts, but her actions in her classes showed this as well, such as the meticulous work on the science project and the leadership actions she took within the group. Matthew was seen as an intellectual motivated by his interests. When Matthew gets into a topic of interest he was described as getting "absorbed into it and can neglect other things" by his mother. Most of the teachers mentioned that Matthew was always reading at every opportunity he got. Shane was considered an enigma. Inconsistent data led to no clear answer to his motivation. It could be the possibility that he wants to please other people or that he wants to be noticed. There was a possibility that his motivation lies in being determined to keep up with Samantha and Matthew. In his own words, he said he was motivated because "I'm curious and I want to know more about things." Any or all of these factors may contribute to Shane's motivational personality.

There are several implications for practice from this study that could be considered by teachers and parents. By being able to identify motivational factors of the students in their classes, teachers can help students develop behaviors that will contribute to their achievement and desire to learn. The parent's role is critical in the development of motivational attributes in children. Providing various, enjoyable experiences and exhibiting a joy of learning by the parents themselves is a major point made in the literature (Delcourt, 1998; Busch-Rossnagel & Morgan, 1998).

Future research is needed in mastery motivation development in elementary school children. In regards to this study, a collective case study is recommended of children of multiple births to inquire further into the phenomenon of motivation. It would be interesting to see if the same dynamic occurred within other sets of triplets; a basic framework that determined some factors of motivation, yet subtle differences emerging after observing each child.

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APPENDIX A

Sample Work by the Participants

All About

Samantha

1. I feel happiest when I am with my family.
2. I think I am good at reading
3. I care about my cat.
4. Two words that describe me the best are smart and happy
5. I help out at home by making my bed, washing dishes, and vacuuming.
6. I know I am a good friend because I play and laugh with people and not at people.
7. I feel best about myself when I please my parents, or teachers.
8. I feel sad when alone.
9. I am able to help out at school by passing out papers.
10. The thing I like best about me is my green eyes, and long blonde hair.

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Note To Teacher: Have each student write his name on the line to complete the title; then have him complete the sentences. Use the completed activities with "Dear Me!" on page 113.

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How About a Little Help? (cont.)

Here is a paragraph that is missing some parts. The **blue** numbers in parentheses are where the missing parts belong. Can you fill them in? Be sure to use complete sentences.

I would not like to lose my big toe for three reasons. The first reason is, I do not want to lose my big toe because it would be hard to walk.

The next reason is, My shoe might not fit properly.

Finally, if I lost my big toe, I would look funny in front of everybody, and they would laugh which would make me feel sad.

I want to keep my big toe!

Try another one.

I should receive an "A" on this assignment for three reasons. Number one, my sentences make sense. Number two, I sat and thought about my answer for what seemed like 1,000 years. Number three, Mrs. Fitts is very pretty and kind and she is the best teacher in the world.

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Extension: Try some more on a separate piece of paper.

- I would like to build a fort in my backyard for three reasons.
- My sister (brother, cousin, friend) is from another planet and there are four items of evidence to prove this.
- I (do not) like cats for four reasons.
- There are three reasons I would (not) eat a snail—even for one hundred dollars.

All About

Matthew

1. I feel happiest when I go to a museum.
2. I think I am good at reading.
3. I care about my relatives.
4. Two words that describe me the best are talented and active.
5. I help out at home by mowing the yard.
6. I know I am a good friend because when I say I'm your friend I mean it.
7. I feel best about myself when I make my parents happy.
8. I feel sad when my daddy goes to work.
9. I am able to help out at school by running errands.
10. The thing I like best about me is my sense of humor.

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Note To Teacher: Have each student write his name on the line to complete the title; then have him complete the sentences. Use the completed activities with "Dear Me!" on page 113.

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Matthew
Language

Oct. 29, 1999
Mrs. Fitts #112

A Great Trip

Frank, Steven, and I went to London. Our bags were heavy with things we needed.

First, I flew in a plane. The plane flew above the clouds. It was a long way down.

Next, we landed in our destination. Our destination was congested with planes. We had to wait an haur.

Last, we stayed for two weeks. It was a lot of fun. We went to alot of museums.

finally, we had to go home. I think we will go to California. next year.

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All About

Jonas

1. I feel happiest when I'm [illegible] and [illegible].
2. I think I am good at math.
3. I care about school.
4. Two words that describe me the best are friendly and smart.
5. I help out at home by cutting grass.
6. I know I am a good friend because I have a lot of friends.
7. I feel best about myself when I'm helping somebody.
8. I feel sad when I'm hurt.
9. I am able to help out at school by checking papers.
10. The thing I like best about me is I'm smart.

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